

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 304573 TOSEC 250067

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S/S - MR. ORTIZ

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TAGS: SOPH, PFOR, CU, US, AO

SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

1. HEREWITH FULL TEXT WASHINGTON POST EDITORIAL, TUESDAY, DECEMBER 30, HEADED "HAVANA'S MEN IN ANGOLA".

2. AFRICA IS NOT THE ONLY CONTINENT WHERE AMERICAN PRIORITIES ARE BEING SKEWED BY THE ADMINISTRATION'S ANGOLA POLICY.

CUBA'S INVOLVEMENT IN ANGOLA, PRESIDENT FORD DECLARED THE OTHER DAY, "DESTROYS ANY OPPORTUNITY" FOR IMPROVEMENT OF CUBAN-AMERICAN RELATIONS -- A PROSPECT PREVIOUSLY REGARDED AS CENTRAL TO THE U.S. POSITION IN THIS HEMISPHERE. "I MEAN THAT LITERALLY," MR. FORD ADDED, DRIVING IN AN EXTRA NAIL.

3. HE WAS GROSSLY OVER-REACTING. CUBA IS NOT THE FIRST COUNTRY TO DISPATCH AN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE ABROAD IN THIS PERIOD OF "DETENTE". WE RECALL FORCES ALMOST 100 TIMES AS LARGE SENT BY THE SOVIET UNION, INTO CZECHOSLOVAKIA, AND BY UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 STATE 304573 TOSEC 250067

THE UNITED STATES, INTO VIETNAM. MOREOVER, WE DO NOT HEAR

MR. FORD CRITICIZING ZAIRE OR SOUTH AFRICA, WHICH HAVE SOLDIERS IN ANGOLA BACKING THE "AMERICAN" SIDE.

4. FOR OUR PART, WE OPPOSE ALL FOREIGN INTERVENTION IN ANGOLA. BUT CUBA CAN AT LEAST MAKE THE CLAIM ON SOLID RACIAL GROUNDS (AS FIDEL CASTRO JUST HAS) THAT THE BLOOD OF AFRICA "RUNS ABUNDANTLY THROUGH OUR VEINS. WE ARE NOT ONLY A LATIN-AMERICAN COUNTRY, WE ARE A LATIN-AFRICAN COUNTRY." NO DOUBT CUBAN INVOLVEMENT IN ANGOLA ALSO ARISES IN LARGE PART FROM SOVIET BIDDING. BUT THAT IS YET ANOTHER REASON WHY THE UNITED STATES SHOULD NOT KEEP ENGAGING ALL ITS PRESTIGE, WHILE BEING IN A POSITION TO COMMIT ONLY LIMITED RESOURCES, IN THE ANGOLAN WAR.

5. MR. FORD'S VERDICT THAT THE CUBAN ROLE "DESTROYS ANY OPPORTUNITY" FOR BETTER RELATIONS IS ESPECIALLY UNFORTUNATE. HE OVERLOOKS THAT SUCH IMPROVEMENT, THOUGH PROBABLY USEFUL AND DESIRABLE FOR MR. CASTRO FOR ECONOMIC REASONS, IS NOT SO ESSENTIAL AFTER 15 YEARS OF "ISOLATION" THAT THE CUBAN WILL PAY ANY POLITICAL PRICE FOR IT. THE PRESIDENT ALSO OVERLOOKS THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS A GREAT DEAL TO EXPLAIN TO CUBA: THE BAY OF PIGS, COUNTLESS GUERRILLA RAIDS AND ECONOMIC PRESSURES -- NOT TO SPEAK OF MORE THAN A DOZEN AMERICAN PLOTS, RECENTLY DISCLOSED, TO KILL MR. CASTRO IN A RICH VARIETY OF WAYS.

6. WHO DARES ARGUE THAT CUBA'S ANGOLA VENTURE HURTS THE UNITED STATES MORE THAN WHAT THIS COUNTRY DID TO CUBA OVER THE YEARS? WHO BELIEVES THAT WASHINGTON HAS THE MORAL SUPERIORITY WHICH ALLOWS IT TO BE SO AFFRONTED BY THE PRESENCE OF CUBAN SOLDIERS IN ANGOLA? DOES THE SOVIET ROLE IN ANGOLA ALSO "DESTROY ANY OPPORTUNITY" TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH MOSCOW? OBVIOUSLY -- OR PERHAPS WE SHOULD SAY -- PRESUMABLY NOT. MR. FORD IS NOT THE FIRST PRESIDENT TO LASH OUT AT CUBA'S COMMUNIST-ORIENTED GOVERNMENT, TRYING TO MAKE IT PAY A SPECIAL PRICE BECAUSE IT HAS THE EFFRON-TERY TO THUMB ITS NOSE AT UNCLE SAM. THE MONROE DOCTRINE MENTALITY DIES HARD.

7. INSTEAD OF SURRENDERING SOUND POLICY TO A FIT OF BAD UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 STATE 304573 TOSEC 250067

TEMPER, MR. FORD SHOULD BE TELLING MR. CASTRO: THE UNITED STATES IS DISTURBED AT THE ANGOLAN INTERVENTION, BUT IT REALIZES IT TAKES PLACE IN A CONTEXT OF OTHER INTERVENTIONS AND OF OTHER GRIEVANCES ON BOTH SIDES, AND SO IT PROPOSES TO CUBAN-AMERICAN RELATIONS ACROSS THE BOARD. ONLY ON THIS BASIS IS THE UNITED STATES LIKELY TO PROVIDE CUBA WITH THE INCENTIVE TO HALT THE PARTICULAR ACTIVITIES, SUCH AS AFRICAN ADVENTURES, WHICH THE CUBANS NOW FIND WORTH

THEIR WHILE. ALTERNATIVELY, MR. FORD COULD BITE HIS LIP
AND MRELY CONDEMN CUBA WITHOUT MORTGAGING AMERICAN POLICY,
MEANWHILE WAITING FOR ANGOLAN NATIONALISM AND THE VICISSI-
TUDES OF BATTLE TO ERODE WHATEVER SHORT-TERM GAINS HAVANA
MAY MAKE.

8. IF THE PRESIDENT HOLDS OUT IMPROVED RELATIONS IN THE
MANNER OF AN ADULT OFFERING CANDY TO AN OBEDIENT CHILD,

HOWEVER, HE WILL KEEP GETTING KICKS IN THE SHINS. AS IT
IS, IT WILL TAKE AMERICAN DIPLOMATS, IF THEY CAN PROCEED
AT ALL, MANY MONTHS TO WORK OUT OF THE CORNER IN WHICH THE
PRESIDENT HAS PAINTED THE COUNTRY'S CUBA POLICY. IN
PRACTICE THIS MEANS THE POSTPONEMENT OF A LONG OVERDUE
MUTUAL ACCOMMODATION TO 1977 OR BEYOND. IS ANGOLA REALLY
WORTH IT? (END TEXT) ROBINSON

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